

Robinson Crusoe's Island.

From a Letter to the Rochester Democrat.

The sun was bathing the beautiful island with a flood of golden light as we neared its picturesque harbor. In little boats we went ashore and landed in the primitive manner of running the boat aground and pulling it up on the shore. It was difficult to realize that we were, indeed, on the historical, mysterious island that imagination had pictured from childhood's early hours in so many fanciful forms. The books tell you that it was on this lovely island that, in 1704, the celebrated English navigator, Dampier, landed his coxswain, Alexander Selkirk, with whom he had quarreled, and left him alone on this uninhabited spot, with a small quantity of provisions and tools. Here he lived four years, till picked up by a passing ship and brought back to Europe. It was from the notes he made during his solitary residence that Daniel Defoe composed his incomparable work of "Robinson Crusoe." No book, doubtless, ever held the childish interest with greater fascination than that which describes his wanderings on this mysterious and enchanted island. That which has always seemed but a dreamy romance was now before you. The scenes where all the wild and wondrous experiences were described are just at hand, and you wander on, as it were, but just aroused from a fanciful dream. Perchance it was on this sandy beach along which you wander that Crusoe first discovered the footprints of his good man Friday.

The island is about seven Spanish leagues in circumference, or a trifle over twenty English miles. It belongs to Chili, and for a number of years the government used it as a place for transporting convicts, till one night all the prisoners arose in their power, killed their keepers and taking the only boats on the island sailed away and were never heard of more. Of late years the government has leased the island to one man, who pays something like \$2,000 a year for its use. This man has a small colony of workmen whom he employs in cutting timber, drying fish and goat skins and sending them every few months in large quantities to the markets at Valparaiso. There are to be found in the waters about the island, lobsters of a peculiar kind, from two to four feet in length. Every variety of fish in the greatest abundance seem to swarm about this lone island. It is a great resort for whalers, who put in here for a few days to supply themselves with fish, poultry and game, which they obtain at marvelously low prices from the sovereign ruler of the island. Many years ago two lone, lorn goats were brought to the island and their families and children have increased so rapidly that to-day thousands and tens of thousands of them are to be found in every part of the island. Large numbers of them are shot each year, and their dried skins sold in Valparaiso as a source of large income to the lessee of the island.

A \$182,000 Game of Poker.

Pittsburgh Dispatch.

"It was on my trip to Pittsburgh, up the Ohio that I played my last game of cards," said Col. Dan Rice. "It was in '49 on board the steamer Revolution, and I have never turned a card for pleasure or profit since. I don't think I ever told this circumstance before. I used to be terribly fond of poker. It was a great game in the old days, and is yet, I guess. I had about \$400,000 with me in money and property, and I owned the steamboat on which we were traveling. My ring master, Canada Bill, the famous gambler who died in Reading, Pa., a couple of years ago, a young blood from Wheeling and myself constituted the party at poker that night. When we quit I was \$182,000 ahead."

"You must have held some remarkable hands during the game, Colonel," suggested the reporter.

"No, sir; it wasn't that so much as I had more money than they. They put up their watches and diamonds, and my wife was nearly crazy, for she never knew I played cards. I gave them their jewelry back but kept the cash. Canada Bill lost about \$100,000 and the Wheeling chap about \$80,000. Canada Bill was a notorious gambler and played high, but that was the biggest game he ever played, I guess. Pettybone, the poker king, as he was called, taught me how to play cards. From that night on that boat to this day I have never played a game of cards."

Why Judge Lynch?

We have fallen upon evil days, so far as the administration of justice is concerned in this country. Our courts have become inefficient. They waste time and money, and do not punish evil-doers. A scoundrel named Dukes, after cruelly wronging a young woman and murdering her father, was declared not guilty by a jury. Whereupon the son of the murdered man, goaded by public sentiment, kills the slayer of his father. A syndicate of scoundrels deliberately rob the Government by what are known as Star Route Mail Con-

tracts, but after two wearisome trials and the expenditure of over \$700,000, the rascals are declared honest men by a so-called intelligent jury. So tardy and wasteful are our courts, that all over the country the people are taking the law into their own hands. Lynching has become popular. Every such occurrence is a rebuke to our courts. The whole modern world is intent upon saving time and money. The inventions of this century have these ends in view. We are impatient of any unnecessary delay to travel, production, or the transaction of business. But the dispensers of justice in this country stubbornly reform any of the old methods known to court procedures. No new case before the Supreme Court of the United States can get even a hearing until three years have elapsed. The Star Route trials occupied five months. One government lawyer consumed nine days in making his final speech. As General Sherman well said, a lawyer who cannot tell his story in one hour, and say all that is necessary in that time, should be banished from the bar. The trouble is that courts seem to think the community exists for the benefit of the lawyer, and that the fees of the latter are of far more consequence than the protection of the community and the punishment of the criminal. Judge Lynch makes mistakes, of course, but his charges are moderate and his aim is always to inflict swift punishment upon the guilty. Our lawyer caste embraces more able men than all the other professions put together, but the monopoly they now control of making, expounding, and executing the laws, will certainly be taken from them unless they mend their ways and make justice less expensive and far more certain.—Demorest's Monthly for August.

Torpedo-proof.

As we have neither guns nor ships in this country to defend the cities upon our sea coast, we are depending upon the torpedo system to protect our harbors in case of possible war; and this in spite of the fact that torpedoes have proved ineffective in all modern wars to defend assailable harbors. Admiral Farragut showed his contempt of torpedoes in Mobile Bay in his attack on New Orleans. Sir Edward Reed, the eminent naval constructor, has invented an improvement in armor-plated men-of-war which he thinks will make them absolutely safe against the explosion of a torpedo. In his design for a warship the magazines and engines are placed in the upper part of the hull. To the vessel he gives great breadth above the water line, and he covers her with a dome-shaped turtle-back deck, that is intended to be intirely shot proof—partly in consequence of its thickness and partly in consequence of its inclination. The hull of this vessel is intended merely to float the armored upper part, and is not to be used either for engines, stores, or quarters for men. It is to be furnished with a vast number of water tight cells, and even if the whole of it is blown to pieces by torpedoes, the upper part will float like a vast raft. The hull can be made with lines adapted for great speed, and no matter what breadth of beam may be given to the vessel above water line it can not affect her speed, except by the resistance its surface may be to the wind. With a few such vessels as these in the navies of other nations, what a ridiculous figure the United States would cut in a foreign war! According to General McClellan, our war vessels "enjoy the unique distinction of being unable to fight or run." In fact, if we sold off the old hulks we would save a great deal of money and would be quite as well protected. To fight other navies we are as helpless to cope with them as are our savages, who offer battle with spears and arrows against trianed soldiers using rifle, cannon and armed precision.—From Demorest's Monthly for July.

A Dream Discloses Money.

A correspondent of the Terra Haute Express tells a queer dream of Mrs. T., living in Middlebury, Clay county, who engaged some carpet rags of Mrs. S., of the same village. Before they were delivered Mrs. S. died. She was supposed to have some money, but none could be found after her death. A short time after the death of Mrs. S., the rags were delivered to Mrs. T., who dreamed that there was a red ball of rags among the number that contained a pocket book with a certain amount of money in it. She told Mr. T. her dream, and he laughed and said it was nothing but a dream; but it rested on her mind to that extent that she went with some other ladies to the attic in search of the above described ball. It was found, and the process of winding commenced, and to their infinite surprise they found the book and the exact amount of money was found that she dreamed it contained.

—The supreme court holds that in absence of the county judge the presence of the other four members constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business. Both the present attorney general and his predecessor advised that three would make a quorum.

What is the Matter With the Sun.

Rochester Democrat.

A group of sun spots that was just making its appearance on the 28d ult., had reached the sun's center, and had spread over a vast area, while a new group of immense proportions had made its appearance on the east. This group consists of two very large spots connected by a chain of smaller ones. The region is torn in every direction. About the two great storm centers there is evidence of a whirling motion. The tongues to white flame which surround the dark chasms of the spots are bent in the direction of the cyclonic motion. The area of disturbance is now greater than at any time since the sun spot period began. There has been a constant increase in the violence and extent of the solar storms during the past year. The tremendous outbreak of last November is fairly dwarfed by the present convulsions. Unless the sun is undergoing some permanent change it would seem that the storms must soon reach a climax and subside. But so long as they continue we may expect violent storms and unaccountable weather on the earth. The recitation of rain over the north temperate zone had already become a matter of great concern, and there are no immediate prospects of a diminution. The water has been pumped into the air by the sun's increased heat, and it must descend. If this state of things should continue for two or three years more, the most disastrous consequences must follow. In the natural course of events it is expected that the solar disturbance will soon subside. But there is no telling what may happen in our whirl through space.

A Second-Hand Coat.

A party of three young men from the agricultural districts entered a second-hand store, and one of them finally brought a second-hand coat. He was solemnly assured that it was a fit that Shakespeare would have been proud of, and that it increased his beauty 200 per cent., and he went away perfectly satisfied. In about an hour he returned and said: "Say, this coat isn't a fit after all." "What ails dot goat now, eh?" "Well, its too short in the back for one thing." "Let me look. Too short, eh? Um. My friend, who tells you so?" "Both the boys." "And vhas dose poys tailors?" "No." "Do they get outd some fashion-plates from Paris?" "No." "Vhell, how ish it does poys know so much? Dot goat allows for you to stand oop und bend oafar. It allows for your back to shorten oop und lengthen outd." "But the sleeves are too short." "Led me see. Only last night my wife sit up all night to cut off dose sleeves und make 'em in style, and now you vwant a sleeve like Noah wore in der ark. Vhell, nobody would think dot of you." "I can hardly bend my arms," continued the buyer. "Vhell, I sold you dot goat for Sunday. You doan chop wood on Sundays, I hope? When you desire to bend your arms, put on some odder coat." "I am not at all satisfied with it, no matter what you say." "Vhell, I can't help dot. After you buy dot goat you fall down, or shump, or drink peer, und get your body all out of shape, und den come back und complain. My friend, dot goat vhas for a shentleman. When you wear it you must be a shentleman." "I paid you \$8 for it, and I'll take \$4."

"No." "You can have it for \$3." "Young man, let me explain. I vhas partner mit my wife. She buys und I sell. She is now in Chicago. Doan you sell dot goat. Take it home und wait until you shrink a little und your back shortens oop, und you vhill den put on dot goat und set all der girls crazy und make all der young men shealous. Take my advice. I vhas in der clothing peesness forty years, und I know der cloth in dot goat. It vhas a good thunder shower und two games of base-ball to make it fit you like a handle to a coffee-mill.—Detroit Free Press.



The St. Joseph (Mo.) Gazette rejoices over the shooting of Editor Elam, of Richmond and says: "Now for that little weasel Mahone." It is supposed the killing has commenced.

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